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New York City waitress fired for not getting COVID-19 vaccine right away, she says



Photo by: Nam Y. Huh/AP

Prepared COVID-19 Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine syringes are seen at Edward Hospital in Naperville, Ill., Thursday, Dec. 17, 2020. Illinois received about 43,000 doses in its first shipment of a COVID-19 vaccine Monday as health officials reported another

By: Scripps National

Posted at 3:30 PM, Feb 18, 2021 and last updated 3:38 PM, Feb 18, 2021

A waitress at a New York City restaurant says she was let go after her employer required employees to get the COVID-19 vaccine and she asked for time to study possible side effects.

Restaurant workers, including servers, cooks, and those making deliveries, are now eligible in New York to get the vaccine.

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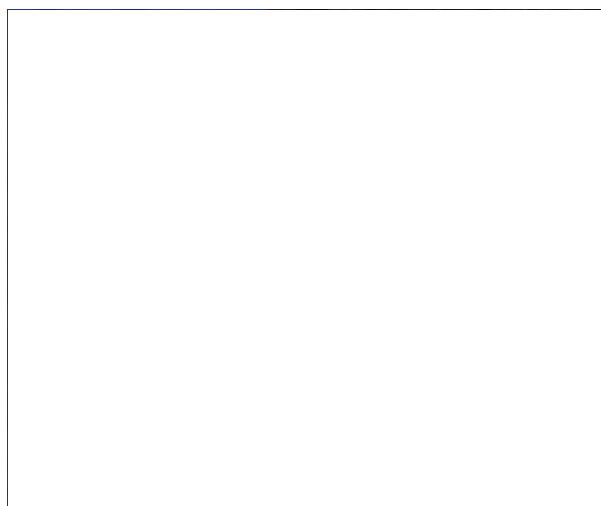
Over the weekend, the Red Hook Tavern in Brooklyn required employees to get vaccinated, according to the [New York Times](#). On Monday, after working 13 hours on Valentine's Day, waitress Bonnie Jacobson was terminated.

Jacobson says she asked for time to study the vaccine's possible effects on fertility, saying there was just not enough information available at this time.

In an interview with the [Times](#), Jacobson said she supports the vaccine, and "if it wasn't for this one thing, I would probably get it."

"My husband and I just got married, and were planning on starting to try to have children in August," [Jacobson told WNBC](#), who first reported her story. "It's already been postponed, I would hate for something to happen and me get the vaccine and we have to hold off a few more years."

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In response, the Red Hook Tavern says the issue could have been handled differently, and that they changed employee guidelines for requesting a



The Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines were not tested on pregnant women during their trials. However, there is no evidence to suggest they affect fertility and there have been no signs of harmful effects in studies on animals at this time.

The [CDC stresses](#) that getting the COVID-19 vaccine is “a personal choice” for women who are pregnant and women should talk to their doctors.

According to the [World Health Organization](#), although they recommended pregnant women not to use the vaccine unless they had underlying health concerns or potential exposure, they said “based on what we know about this kind of vaccine, we don’t have any specific reason to believe there will be specific risks that would outweigh the benefits of vaccination for pregnant women.”

While the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [said companies](#) could require workers to get vaccinated, Jacobson’s termination seems like an [“extreme”](#) step to some employment attorneys.

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